

Harvard Square Project Update

Design Process

The 15-member Harvard Square Design Committee has been working with city staff and consultants since April 2002 developing a master plan of improvements in Harvard Square. Fourteen committee meetings and two community meetings have been held to identify issues, develop alternatives and get input from the larger community.

The master plan of improvements includes reconstructed roadways and sidewalks, curb extensions, new crosswalks, wider sidewalks, bicycle facilities, new street trees, improved plazas, new signage for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists, and lighting improvements. Construction of the high priority improvements, described below, is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2005.

High Priority Improvements

Construction scheduled to begin in the summer of 2005.

CHURCH STREET AND JOHNSTON GATE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE IMPROVEMENTS

- Reconstruct Church Street roadway and sidewalks. Install new pedestrian scale light fixtures.
- Improve sidewalk conditions for pedestrians on Church Street by widening the sidewalk between Massachusetts Avenue and Palmer Street adjacent to the movie theater, minimizing sidewalk obstructions and installing tree grates to provide as much usable sidewalk space as possible.
- Signalize the pedestrian crossing between Johnston Gate and McArthur Square to improve the crossing for pedestrians and provide a left turn for cyclists from Mass. Ave. / Peabody Street onto Church Street.

JFK STREET BETWEEN MEMORIAL DRIVE AND ELIOT STREET

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalks. Install new “1907” light fixtures.

LAMPOON PLAZA (MT. AUBURN AND BOW STREETS BETWEEN HOLYOKE AND PLYMPTON STREETS)

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalks. Install new light fixtures.
- Create pedestrian crossing island on Mt. Auburn Street at Linden Street to improve pedestrian crossings, eliminate expanse of asphalt, and provide landscape area.

PALMER STREET

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalk area to create a shared street – a street where pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers all share the street space. This provides more space for pedestrians and makes the street accessible. Public artist Jody Pinto is developing the design of Palmer Street to transform it into an exciting and active area for street life.

“SUPER CROSSWALK” BETWEEN OUT-OF-TOWN NEWS AND THE COOP

- Improve crossing for pedestrians by enlarging pedestrian crossing area and installing additional curb ramps and pedestrian signal heads.

WINTHROP STREET

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalk area to create a shared street – a street where pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers all share the street space. This provides more space for pedestrians, makes the street accessible and will bring more activity into the street.

Highlight of Other Master Plan Improvements

Recently Completed

BRATTLE / MASON INTERSECTION

- Constructed curb extensions and a crossing island on Mason Street to reduce the length of the crosswalks and reduce the speeds of turning vehicles.
- Construction was done in conjunction with roadwork on Brattle Street.

ELIOT PLAZA

- Enhanced pedestrian connection to the river by realigning the alley of trees and providing enhanced landscaping along the back edge of the plaza.
- Installed bike parking along the back. 2 bus shelters will be installed this summer for the heavily used bus stop.
- Construction of the initial phase of landscaping improvements was recently completed in conjunction with the Harvard Square storm water management project.

Construction Not Currently Funded

FLAGSTAFF PARK

- Provide bicycle and pedestrian path through Flagstaff Park to improve connections between Harvard Square and Massachusetts Avenue to the north and also to open up underutilized open space.
- City has appropriated money for the design phase of this project and will be seeking grant funding for the construction of these improvements.

BENNETT STREET

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalks.
- Widen sidewalks to provide accessible sidewalks.

JFK STREET BETWEEN ELIOT STREET AND SUPER CROSSWALK

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalks including curb extensions and additional crosswalks. Install new pedestrian scale Acorn light fixtures.

LINDEN AND PLYMPTON STREETS

- Reconstruct roadway and sidewalks.
- Improve the sidewalk conditions for pedestrians by minimizing the number of sidewalk obstructions. Replace existing meters with centralized pay and display meters, which require less sidewalk area. Locate lighting at the back of sidewalk on private property.

UNIVERSITY ROAD

- Provide accessible sidewalks on both sides of the street.

WORDSWORTH TRIANGLE

- Reconfigure triangle to improve pedestrian access through the plaza, improve pedestrian crossings between Wordsworth and the triangle, and enhance landscaping.

Project Schedule

2002

- April** 15 member Harvard Square Design Committee formed to advise city staff and a team of consultants developing improvements for Harvard Square.
- April – Oct.** Sidewalk, roadway, lighting, and landscaping issues identified. Traffic circulation options developed.
- November** **First Community Meeting**

2003

- Nov. - May** Transportation improvements refined. Conceptual plans for plaza improvements developed.
- May** **Second Community Meeting**
- Fall / Winter** Develop plan for sidewalk materials, lighting, landscaping and signage. Develop list of high priority improvements.

2004

- May** **Community Open House**
- Late Fall** Scheduled construction of high priority improvements.
Estimated Budget: \$3.5 million